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Rogers successful bidder on EORN project

CHAD INGRAM

Staff Reporter

Rogers Communications is the successful bidder on the contract for the Eastern Ontario Regional Network's cell gap project, now valued at more than \$300 million, anticipated to get underway this spring.

Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock MPP and Ontario Infrastructure Minister Laurie Scott, along with HKLB MP Jamie Schmale, joined municipal politicians from Haliburton County for an announcement in Wilberforce on March 19.

"We're going to see people here, and in our communities, have such an improved quality of life, for our businesses, for people, personally, to connect with so many services," Scott said, praising the partners involved in the project. "... This is, I think, a big game-changer for the people of Haliburton County."

Schmale noted the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the county's lack of reliable internet and cell service.

"We saw, even pre-pandemic, the need for all of that," Schmale said. "But now since the pandemic has really kicked in, we really see the need for quality high-speed internet and cellular service."

see **WORK** page 3



Lining up for hope

Frontline workers, which included emergency personnel, community health care providers, dental office workers, funeral services workers, Life Labs workers, and grocery store staff line up on Thursday, March 18 outside the HHHS vaccination hub located at the Pinestone Resort and Conference Centre. See story on page 2. /DARREN LUM Staff

Vaccination clinic cut short at arena

SUE TIFFIN

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The A. J. LaRue arena was announced on March 18 as the last of six vaccination clinics in the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge district health unit, first in a board of health meeting and then in an online announcement and press release by Dysart et al township that morning – but the site's availability as a spot for mass immunization was reduced largely to ensure summer ice is available in the community for user groups and to meet the township's contract with the Haliburton Hockey Haven.

On March 19, Dysart et al announced that instead of being used as a vaccination site from April 5 to September as initially arranged, the clinic will be cut short on June 12, continuing at an as-yet-unknown location, so that the arena can be used for recreation purposes throughout the summer instead.

"Dysart et al has been in further discussions with the HKPR District Health Unit yesterday and today about the vaccination centre at the A.J. LaRue Arena regarding the use of the arena as a vaccination site," reads the March 19 press release from the municipality. "We are pleased to announce that a solution has been found to address the concerns expressed by so many throughout our community in response to the pending closure of the arena. The vaccination centre will still be located at the A.J. LaRue

see **HALIBURTON** page 15



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Vaccination clinics underway in Haliburton County

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

Standing outside the Haliburton Highlands Health Services vaccination hub located at the Pinesetone Resort and Conference Centre in Haliburton on Thursday, March 18, Kelly Lawr was readying herself to join the line of frontline workers and receive the first of two COVID-19 doses.

The married mother of three said she was doing it to keep her family safe and that although she was a little hesitant because of the vaccine's short history, she knew it was part of a process to return to a life before the pandemic.

"We have to start somewhere, right? I'm going to do what I can to keep myself and my family safe or whoever. It's everybody," she said.

Health Canada provides a comprehensive breakdown on vaccine safety, concerns and possible side effects on its website at www.canada.ca. It outlines the measures for safety and provides a list of the common vaccine side effects, which can include mild fever, flu-like symptoms such as chills, fatigue, joint pain, headache and muscle aches, and redness, soreness or swelling at the site of where the vaccine was given. It also includes specific information related to vaccination for COVID-19 such as the ingredients in each of the three COVID-19 vaccines.

Lawr, who is an on-call Canada Post worker, was able to get her first of two vaccination doses on the second of two days of vaccinations at the Pinesetone because her boss told her, as a frontline worker, she was eligible.

"I figured, you know what? Let's do it," she said.

It's not known when she will receive her second dose, but Kelly believes this first dose will lead back to life before the pandemic.

"I want to see my family. I want to sit down and have a nice get together, whether it be a bonfire or a dinner or something when we can get back together," she said, referring to loved ones and extended family outside her household.

Off to Kelly's side, her father Philip Lawr had just received his dose.

"I wanted to get it for the same reasons: family and



Frontline workers line up for their vaccination shots on Thursday, March 18 outside the HHHS vaccination hub located at the Pinesetone Resort and Conference Centre. /DARREN LUM Staff

everything else. But you always hear about the horror stories, you know? The reactions, you know. Is there going to be something happen," he said. "I work at the Foodland in Haliburton. I see people come in everyday and there are so many deniers. It's just the cold. It's just this and that. You hear of all these people dying and I know it's more so I have to protect myself and I have to protect my family so, yes."

Coincidentally, he was part of this group to get their vaccination because he was hired at the Haliburton Foodland at the end of July last year to help temporarily with the implementation of the COVID-19 protocols, such as counting customers coming in and sanitizing high-touch surfaces. It was thought he would only be needed until Christmas.

"If it hadn't been for COVID, I wouldn't be employed and vaccinated," he said.

He adds his elderly parents live down the road and he's only talked to them online.

"This is just a start. It can only get better from here," he said.

Philip was one of 34 Haliburton Foodland employees

that received the vaccine, which is about 65 per cent of all staff at the store.

Owner of Todd's Independent Grocer Steven Todd confirmed a social media post about his communication to organizers of the clinic to include grocery staff with the other front line workers, but it had little influence, as things were in place, he said.

"They had already a plan in place. They did an amazing job in getting it together in a couple days. We got probably 20 staff done ... and hopefully they have another one in the near future and we can get the rest of them," he said.

Todd, who points out he reached out with his pharmacist's connection knowing long-term care residents and staff and vulnerable residents had received the vaccination already, said this is about a quarter of his staff. He adds his staff will see upwards of 12,000 people in a week during the summer.

"The more chance they can keep us safe the less it's going to spread throughout our stores and the community," he said.

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Highland Wood COVID-19 outbreak resolved

The Highland Wood COVID-19 outbreak has been declared over.

The outbreak status was declared March 16, 2021 when two staff members received positive results from surveillance testing.

The staff members who received positive test results were re-swabbed as per protocol and both received negative results today.

HKPRDHU opted to take a conservative approach with the positive results yesterday given the increase in positive cases currently in our community.

"We appreciate this cautious approach to ensure the safety of our residents," says Carolyn Plummer, president and CEO of HHHS.

Highland Wood residents were all swabbed yesterday as directed by HKPRDHU and these results have all been reported as negative as well. With these negative results, HKPRDHU re-evaluated the status of the outbreak and determined that Highland Wood no longer met the criteria for outbreak.

HHHS will continue to closely monitor residents and continue with rigorous infection prevention measures. Out of an abundance of caution the two staff members will continue to self-isolate for 14 days and screening frequency will be increased for all Highland Wood staff and essential caregivers, who provide important physical and emotional support to long-term care residents. Residents will now be able to resume socially distant activities within the home.

-Staff

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At least 66 people from Haliburton County make 2020 'Sunshine List'

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

More than 200,000 public servants made it onto Ontario's 2021 'Sunshine List', including at least 66 individuals from Haliburton County.

On Friday [March 19], the provincial government released the salaries of public sector employees who were paid \$100,000 or more last year. In what was a record year, 205,606 people were named on the list in 2021, up from 167,098 in 2020.

That growth is primarily attributed to increases at the public health and school board level. There was a 59 per cent increase in the number of health care workers to make the list in 2021, with a 55 per cent increase for those who work in education.

"The pandemic created significant demands on many parts of the public service to support Ontarians. Staff in many sectors, notably health care, worked

extraordinary hours to help keep Ontario safe," a press release distributed by the provincial government reads. "Pandemic-related payments, such as significant overtime hours and pandemic pay, resulted in higher incomes year-over-year for some employees, including the potential to surpass the \$100,000 threshold."

Haliburton Highlands Health Services had 25 employees included in this year's list, with salaries ranging from \$100,964 for a registered nurse to \$207,191 for the president and CEO. There were 17 staff from the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit included, with salaries ranging from \$101,423 up to \$406,153. A nurse practitioner from the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team also made the list, having brought in \$124,774 in 2020.

There were some familiar names on the education side too. Principals from Haliburton Highlands Secondary School [\$133,960], Stuart Baker Elementary School [\$124,014], Archie Stouffer Elementary School [\$124,014] and both Cardiff Elementary School and Wilber-

force Elementary School [\$123,467] were included. Due to the way the 'Sunshine List' reports employers, and the way teachers have moved around and changed positions over the past 12 months, the *Echo* was unable to identify exactly how many teachers and members of school staff from Haliburton County made \$100,000 or more last year. There were 220 Trillium Lakelands District School Board employees included on the 2021 list.

The County of Haliburton had 11 members of staff featured, including the CAO [\$169,972], treasurer [\$133,920], director of public works [\$133,920], director of planning [\$131,970], director of IT [\$109,988], director of tourism [\$109,988], and the manager of human resources [\$107,340]. There were also four individuals from the Haliburton County Paramedic Service, including the chief paramedic [\$135,829], two deputies [\$116,988 and \$116,363] and a paramedic [\$100,076].

The Dysart et al CAO [\$132,234], treasurer [\$111,016] and director of public works [\$102,772] all made the list, as too

did three staffers from Algonquin Highlands – the CAO [\$142,551], treasurer [\$107,535], and the manager of parks, recreation and trails [\$105,683]. Two township staffers from Minden Hills were included, being the CAO [\$193,133] and director of public works [\$132,279], while the CAO of Highlands East was the sole staffer from that municipality to be highlighted, having been paid \$129,237 in 2020.

Introduced in 1996, Ontario's 'Sunshine List' includes the salaries of employees from the provincial government, crown agencies and corporations, Ontario Power Generation and subsidiaries, publicly funded organizations such as hospitals, municipalities, school boards, universities and colleges and non-profit organizations that receive \$1 million or more, or receive between \$120,000 and \$1 million if the funding they receive from the province is 10 per cent or more of their gross revenues.

For more information on Ontario's 2021 'Sunshine List', visit ontario.ca/salarydisclosure.

Work to improve internet connectivity to begin 'this calendar year'

from page 1

"It's been a long time coming in helping produce another piece to that puzzle," Schmale said.

The public-private partnership project will include upgrading existing towers and the construction of 300 new cell towers throughout eastern Ontario and aims to ensure 99 per cent of the area has cellular calling service; that 95 per cent of the area has sufficient coverage to run video and applications; and that 85 per cent has the capability to stream high-definition video. The project has been in the planning and fundraising stages for more than four years, with the provincial and federal governments each contributing \$71 million. Municipal governments throughout the area are contributing \$10 million (the County of Haliburton up to \$565,000), and while initially it was expected a private sector partner would contribute \$61 million for a total project value of \$213, it was announced last week that Rogers will contribute \$150 million, pushing its total value past \$300 million.

The entire project is expected to be completed within five years, with heightened connectivity achieved in some areas in the interim. Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin is a member of the EORN board, and said the project would allow for other providers, including some smaller ones, to piggyback, installing their equipment on the towers.

"There are going to be some things happen in this calendar year," Devolin



MP Jamie Schmale, left, Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin, Haliburton County Warden Liz Daniels, Highlands East Mayor Dave Burton and MPP Laurie Scott during an announcement regarding the next steps of the EORN cell gap project outside the Willberforce library branch on March 19. /CHAD INGRAM Staff

said during last week's announcement. "I think what will happen with Rogers, now ... I think they'll do their best before the year's out to roll out a timeline across the region, and of course all 13 regions are wanting to know when it's coming to them, and I think they will be able probably, before the end of the year, to give us a lot more specific information on that front. We'd love to know all the answers today, but it's just not possible yet."

EORN is owned by the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus, which includes 13 municipal governments, of which the

County of Haliburton is one.

Algonquin Highlands Deputy Mayor and Haliburton County Warden Liz Dan-

nielsen sits on the EOWC board.

"It's so perfect that today is a sunny day and we can all be outside and celebrate something that means so much to us all," Daniels said. "I have been really proud to work with the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus and the EORN board, as well as their team. It's an extraordinary group of people and they have worked so hard on our behalf, and this is going to mean so much to all of us here in Haliburton County, and in fact all of eastern Ontario, from businesses to our economy to schooling, kids trying to home-school. It just means everything to all of us, and it's truly a great day for Haliburton County."

The request for proposals for the project was issued in April of 2020. According to EORN, 40 per cent of the area it serves does not have access to speeds fast enough to allow the streaming of HD video; 20 per cent does not have access to standard definition video typical mobile app use or video app calling; and 10 per cent has no voice calling service at all.



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Record winter for Highlands Nordic ski club

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

The 2020 – 2021 season was a record year in terms of conditions and for the amount of visitors and paid season holders said the Haliburton Highlands Nordic Trail and Ski Club Association president Thom Lambert.

On the board of the skier-led association since 2014, he can't recall any other season that had as many uninterrupted ski days, which is usually hampered by a lack of snow or warm temperatures and rain events.

"I know people that skied well over 50 days in row this year, uninterrupted," he said, voice rising.

This year's strong results doesn't discount other years when the season has started earlier or lasted as long as five months, he adds. He believes there was a record of total skiers in 2020/21.

It's a challenge to quantify total skiers without a sign-in due to COVID-19 safety measures, but from his observations from seeing the number of vehicles in parking lots he said there was double the amount of skier days to last year.

"It was unbelievable," he said.

With the combination of ideal conditions and the fewer options for recreation with the cancellation of various sporting seasons and temporary closure of the ski resort industry due to the pandemic, the Nordic club was the beneficiary.

Lambert said the club more than doubled their revenue compared to last year.

As of March 8 the club had 92 family memberships (groups of four), which was an increase of 77 per cent compared to last

year while individual memberships rose by 83 per cent from last year with 277.

This was attributed to a "mild winter" and favourable weather conditions, which included the lack of rain, or any kind of thaw and, with the exception of a few days, there weren't any extremely cold days.

Many of this year's skiers were first-time skiers, who had the best experience possible and will be motivated to return because of the ideal conditions, he adds.

The season started officially on Dec. 20 and is technically over, but there was hope it would stretch into April. The contributing factor to the ending of this season is owed to the two warm days with strong winds, which occurred earlier this month.

"We went thinking we were skiing right into April to having a big reserve, to losing a big part of our base over the course of really a day and a half. It was funny. It wasn't rain. It wasn't sun. It was that really warm wind over a day and a half period. You just watched the snow disappear," he said.

Lambert said this past weekend was likely the end, as grooming will cease, but he won't be surprised to see a few die-hards this week.

"We have skiers that are so serious they'll head up into Glebe, if they have to walk a kilometre to get onto decent snow, they'll do it. You know it really depends on ... how soon the biking gets good," he said.

A skier from last year told him she skied until April 15.

He said the trend of the past five years has been a large snowfall in late March or early April so there could be additional days for the really dedicated.

With challenges related to purchasing Nordic ski equipment in the country, there

was a large participation in the club's season-long rental option for members. There were 74 packages rented this year and that translated to a 32 per cent increase over last year. Lambert said they could have rented double this total, if they had the equipment and people to carry out the assistance, which was challenging while abiding by social distancing.

At this point in the year, Lambert said the club hasn't met to decide what the course of action will be for next year related to operations and potentially buying more rental kits.

The club also saw strong numbers for this year's youth programming of Jack Rabbit, with 68 registered skiers. Lambert said they could have accepted 80, but with COVID-19 it wasn't going to be practical.

With the growing popularity of the programming, a committee will be used next year to coordinate Jack Rabbit instead of Lisa Werry assuming the responsibility, as she has for the past five years.

"We just realized it's gotten too big for one person to run. It's also like so many other things, requirements change as well. This was a tough year with all the COVID stuff ... every one of our instructors has to have a police check. All that has to be coordinated," he said.

He adds there are coaching requirements for instructors and these volunteers need to also be trained to know about concussion protocols.

Werry, he said, is to be commended for her efforts the past several years.

"Outside of hockey it's far and away the largest recreation program in the Haliburton Highlands in the winter time," he said. "It's crazy affordable. This was an extremely difficult year. Every week we were on Wednesday, wondering if we were going to be able to run Jack Rabbit

because of COVID. Getting 68 kids in the park with all of their parents and accompanying adults in doing that safely. Lisa did a phenomenal job of organizing that."

Other key volunteers include the team of groomers led by coordinators that include Lambert at Moosewoods, Mike Darlington at Glebe Park and Chris Whittemore at Twin Lakes, and membership coordinator Joleen Thomas.

Grooming was a daily requirement at the three ski trail systems of Glebe Park, Moosewoods and Twin Lakes, Lambert said.

The coordinators helped to lead a "dedicated crew" of close to 12 volunteers.

"We could not operate if we didn't have volunteer groomers and, yeah, these are people that are quite often up ... they're out on the trails in pitch black at 6 o'clock in the morning in really difficult conditions and because we only have one grooming machine per area that means that person is out there by themselves," he said.

After grooming for 20 years, he admits with mobile phones it adds some assurances that didn't exist before.

"I used to carry either skis or snowshoes on our old groomer because it broke down so often. I got sick of walking back from the wilds of Glebe Park in the dark," he said.

Membership coordinator Thomas, who was tasked with registering people, families and helping accommodate for everyone's special requests related to payments, spent hours for all of them to ensure their needs and wants were met.

"It's community building thing. You want people to feel like they found a place that matters to them and they matter to us. Joleen did an amazing job of making people feel that way," he said.

Driver transported by air ambulance from County Road 503

A male driver with serious injuries was transported to a Toronto-area hospital by ORNGE on March 18 after a single vehicle struck a tree on County Road 503 at Buckhorn Road in Gooderham, a collision that is still under investigation.

Members of the Haliburton Highlands OPP received information from the Haliburton Roads department of the single vehicle collision at about 9:15 a.m. OPP and other emergency first responders including fire and paramedics arrived at the scene, which involved a blue, four-door, 2014 Lincoln MKH.

County Road 503 was closed between Tory Hill and County Road 507 for an

OPP technical traffic collision investigation.

The OPP is looking for witnesses and has encouraged people to contact Haliburton Highlands OPP at 705-286-1431 or toll-free at 1-888-310-1122. Information can also be provided anonymously by contacting Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or online at www.stopcrime-here.ca. Calls to Crime Stoppers remain anonymous, callers never have to testify and could receive a cash reward of up to \$2,000 upon arrest.

-Staff

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Parent council launches petition to maintain Learn@Home program

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A group of parents throughout the school district region were dismayed to learn last week that the Learn@Home program likely won't be returning to Trillium Lakelands District School Board [TLDSB] for the 2021/22 school year, and have launched a petition in the hopes of extending at-home learning modules.

Kyra Evans is one of 16 parents currently sitting on the TLDSB Learn@Home parent council. She has spent months advocating for the program after watching her daughter "blossom" during her time learning at home.

"This has been like a detox period for her," Evans said of her daughter, who is in Grade 6.

Having moved to Muskoka from Toronto four years ago, Evans said her daughter struggled after being enrolled in a private elementary school. She was, according to Evans, relentlessly bullied and eventually had to be pulled from the school. She started attending Riverside Public School in Huntsville last February and had a "positive experience," but when COVID-19 hit one month later and schools were closed, she found herself back at square one.

When TLDSB launched its Learn@Home program in September, Evans thought she'd give it a shot.

"Almost immediately, my daughter formed connections with classmates and her teacher beyond what she experienced at in-person school," Evans said. "Learning in a quiet environment provided her with greater concentration power, improving her grades and increasing her academic confidence."

It was a blow then when, last week, Evans found out TLDSB isn't planning to offer its Learn@Home program next year.

Wes Hahn, TLDSB director of education, sent a notice out to parents last Wednesday [March 17] stating the board was planning to reintegrate the approximately 1,500 students currently enrolled in Learn@Home back into the classroom.

"At this time our planning is going to be on the assumption that all students will be back in schools for in-person learning at the beginning of September," Hahn said. "This means that all students will be enrolled for in-person at-school learning in their home school."

Hahn said that at-home remote learning "may be considered" if school boards receive direction from the Ministry of Education, or if concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic are raised by public health officials.

Evans believes there's another voice that should be taken into account – those of the students.

"Many of the children in my daughter's class have shared with her that they have also been bullied in brick-and-mortar school.

“

Other larger, urban boards such as Ottawa and Toronto have announced their intention to keep the Learn@Home program, placing rural students at a distinct disadvantage.

— Krya Evans

Thus, there are many like-minded kids, all happy to be in an environment where they don't feel the need to watch their back all the time," Evans said. "Anyone who was bullied in school remembers what it's like to spend your days always on edge, waiting for the next incident in which you'll need to defend yourself. When this level of 'fight, flight or freeze' is constantly on, it interferes with your ability to learn and grow.

"By contrast, at the Learn@Home program, my daughter has connected to her self-worth again. She has a newfound understanding that she has a lot to offer as a friend, and that in the past the problem was never her. The problem was the toxic environment she was in," she added.

Evans said she has heard several similar stories from other parents in recent weeks and months. Since the Learn@Home parent council is not allowed to discuss any efforts to maintain the program in any official meeting capacity, the decision was made to launch a petition to get the word out there. As of press time, the petition had been signed by 43 individuals.

"Other larger, urban boards such as Ottawa and Toronto have announced their intention to keep the Learn@Home program, placing rural students at a distinct disadvantage. It's our opinion that every student in Ontario should have access to virtual learning, regardless of their geographic location," Evans said.

"The Learn@Home program has had myriad benefits beyond health and safety and therefore should be kept even after the pandemic is over."

To learn more about the petition, visit you.leadnow.ca/petitions/save-learn-home-across-ontario.



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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

It's time for it to disappear

I HAD TO give my head a shake this past Friday afternoon when, with everything else that's happening in the world today, the Ontario government still found time to roll out its 2021 Sunshine List.

Released every year at the beginning of spring, the Sunshine List is a document that shines a light on public sector employees across the province who earn \$100,000 or more annually. While newspapers all across Ontario routinely publish the findings of the annual report, including the identities of those found within, the *Echo* has decided not to name names this year.

Why? Quite frankly, I don't see the point.

Let's be honest for a second and call the Sunshine List what it is – an outdated publicity stunt designed to appeal to one of the worst personality traits a human being possesses: jealousy.

When the Conservative government, led by Mike Harris, first introduced the Sunshine List in 1996, it was offered up under the guise of their 'Common Sense Revolution'. It was supposed to provide accountability on behalf of the public sector and transparency to the taxpayer.

Instead, all the Sunshine List has ever really accomplished is embarrassing those whose names are inscribed within its pages year after year. At its very core, the list is an incredible invasion of privacy. It always has been, and will remain one until the day it is cancelled.

While there are those, undoubtedly, who look forward to the Sunshine List's publication each year, one has to ask the question – why?

What exactly does the Sunshine List accomplish? Knowing how much money an individual at our local school, hospital or town hall makes has absolutely no bearing on any of

our lives. It may, however, have a bearing on theirs. Something that was, apparently, designed to increase productivity today likely has the complete opposite effect.

Disagree? Then answer me this. How many of you would be happy to have your name and earnings plastered in newspapers and around social media for all to see, simply because you earn a good living? Not many, I would assume.

And emphasis should be placed on that last point – a good living. Because that's what \$100,000 a year is now.

Back in 1996, the very first Sunshine List contained 4,501 names.

The recently released list boasted a mammoth 205,606 individual entries. That's nearly a 5,000 per cent increase on the number of people whose earnings were disclosed in that very first list. Extraordinarily, despite inflation rising by some 52 per cent in that time, the cut-off point for the Sunshine List remains the same.

For argument's sake, \$100,000 in 1996, when the list was first

released, would be worth around \$152,060 today. Looking at some other avenues, the average price of a home in Toronto was approximately \$198,150 back in 1996. Today, that average has increased to an eye-watering \$1.025 million. 23 years ago, a litre of gas ran you 56 cents. Today, that very same litre comes at a cost of anywhere between \$1.10 and \$1.30, depending on where you are in Ontario.

So, with everything else on the uppy up, why has the Sunshine List remained at that \$100,000 threshold?

At least 66 people from Haliburton County suffered the ignominy of having their position and earnings called into question last week.

The practice is wrong, and should be halted immediately.



mike baker

Editorial



Sunday at dusk

by Darren Lum

When you need a friend

JIM STARED out into the night. Although it was now officially spring, it sure didn't feel like it. A cold blustery wind was snapping the flag out front and there was a hint of snow on the deck. Jim could see where the yard light caught its dusting, looking like flour on his mum's bread board. He also could see animal tracks that went up to his door then back down onto the ground.

Animals were starting to move around. Everything woke up in the spring. Plants, animals and even people started to show a bit more life. Jim knew under that mud in his yard, things were stirring. Sadly he had also seen another sign of the season when he passed a dead animal on the side of the highway. The sight was enough to spoil his afternoon.

Jim had always been an animal lover. There had been cats, dogs, gerbils, rabbits, and birds around the house when he was growing up. As an adult there had been less but always something. But when his marriage ended and the old cat died, both in the same year, he had sworn off all critters. He just didn't want to deal with any more loss.

Now as he stood looking through the darkness, he saw what had made the tracks in the snow, for it had returned. A dog. A rather sad-looking dog to be exact. Mostly hound, it's ribs showed through the dirty-looking fur though it was hard to get a good look in the poor light. Obviously lost, it turned its head up and met Jim's eye.

Not sure what to do, Jim grabbed some leftover spaghetti still on his dinner plate and put the dish through the door opening. The dog inhaled it. Okay, so now he couldn't ignore the situation. Grabbing a rope from downstairs, he looped it around the dog's neck and brought it inside. Since he wasn't sure what he was dealing with, he decided his basement workroom and an old blanket would do for the night. In the morning he'd ask around in case anyone reported a missing dog.

After a week of checking, there were no takers for the dog. So Jim decided the animal was now his and he named it Bill, after his late brother.

Judging by his appearance, Bill had obviously been on his own for a while. Jim told him they had that in common which was a good way to start a new relationship. For a creature who had been living rough, Bill was surprisingly agreeable. He went along with a bath in the tub even when Jim rubbed vigorously with the flea soap, just in case. But it was obvious Bill had never been walked on a leash so Jim surmised he must have been a hunting dog. Plus he wasn't house trained, something Jim worked quickly to change. Fortunately Bill was smart and caught on to both leash and proper outdoor hygiene.

Every morning and every night Jim and Bill went for a walk down the road. It was good medicine for both of them. Jim often needed a purpose to his day and looking after Bill helped with that. Bill had never had a real relationship with a human so this was new and welcome territory for him.

Besides the walks, Bill enjoyed riding in Jim's pickup. When he sat in the passenger's seat his head was just about even

in height with Jim's. Jim had toyed with the idea of getting a ball cap for Bill but decided against it. It would just blow off when the window was down anyway.

One morning the two of them were walking as usual when Monika the neighbour pulled up beside them on the road. The mud was still bad in spots, especially after last night's rain and Monika's car had turned an unidentifiable colour. Jim's rubber boots were caked and he knew he'd have to get out the wet rags for Bill's feet yet again once they got back home.

Monika admired Bill's coat and bright eyes, asking Jim if he planned on adding any more critters to his household. To this Jim replied that one best friend was all he needed right now.

Down



sharon lynch

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points of view

Movie night

LAST WEEK, Jenn suggested that it would be fun in these pandemicky times for us to start a weekly movie night.

"How is that different from any other night since the pandemic began?" I asked.

She then laid out a set of ground rules to ensure that our official "movie night" would be different.

Basically, it meant "we" (for the purpose of this sentence, the word "we" actually means me) would go to the store and buy movie theatre-type snacks, such as heavily buttered popcorn and licorice and root beer. Oh, and ice cream for afterwards. Then "we" (for the purpose of this sentence, the word "we" actually means Jenn) would pick a great movie that "we" would very much like to watch.

It seemed like a fun idea.

In fact, everything was going smoothly, until Jenn announced "our" movie choice. Apparently, the movie "we" really wanted to watch was *The Witches*, which was made in the 1990 and is considered a classic by someone, probably.

My problem with the movie was that it was not very realistic. It was about witches who hated children and were gathering for a convention in the same hotel as our hero and his grandmother. So it started off good.

Where the realism dropped off for me was when they disclosed that the chief witch, played by Anjelica Huston, had developed a potion that would turn kids into talking mice.

That's where they lost me. I mean really. Talking?

And, I'm sorry, with the same volume as an actual kid?

Needless to say, it was the little details like this that ruined the cinematic experience for me. Plus, not one of the witches had a broom, a magic wand or a single flying monkey. Yeah right.

On the other hand, the fake faces and wigs that all the gathered witches wore were entirely plausible. And I will concede that at least they got the good witch right – she was pretty. [Spoiler alert: she was the one who reversed the potion's effect.]

Script problems aside, it was also missing one crucial element that could have put it into Oscar contention – acting. As far as I could tell, there was not a single moment where that skill was discernible.

But enough about its good points. There were also plenty of moments that made me want to take back all the snacks.

Even Jenn, who enjoyed this movie when she was younger, began to question why.

All this is to say, after the ice cream and post-movie discussion, which consisted of multiple uses of the word "stinker", "we" (for the purpose of this sentence, the word "we" actually means me) decided that maybe it would be best if I chose the next movie.

So next week, I'm probably going to suggest *The Shape of Water*. I have never seen this film but I have been told by better judges of movies than me, that this is an artsy, beautifully crafted, creative film that makes you think and appreciate the art of filmmaking – I guess kind of like the *Die-Hard* series.

In any case, I believe this is just the ticket to take our movie night to the next level of authenticity.

This is a work in progress to be sure.

But should we finally achieve that elevated cinematic feel that Jenn so desperately seeks right now, I think we'll know it when we see it.

I'm guessing it will be right after the final credits roll and she wakes me up.



steve
galea

Loon Tales



pic of the past

A photo of some members of the Walling family, making maple syrup circa 1908. They are boiling off the sap in their open shanty with some of the family and friends gathered around, including Laura Walling, Hazel Walling, Alvin Walling, Arthur 'Bob' Hannaford, Bob Easton, Sam Walling, Tom Walling and Eric Walling. /Photo submitted by Steve Hill

letters to the editor

Fact or fiction

To the Editor,

It appears that a substantial portion of the general public love to seize on conspiracy theories. It further seems (to me) that people who are angry or upset with some aspect of their life, often seek to blame someone or something that they feel they have no control over as being the cause of their distress.

In difficult situations no one likes to face the facts. However if you can allude to an "alternate" fact or fact situation you can manufacture or implant a blame of others for your distressed situation.

If you can create or state alternate facts that have a whisper of veracity, in today's society, often no one will check on you as to the truth of the alternate facts. They say "I know just how they feel" and "we are being bullied and have no recourse".

That is partly how some people gain favour and power. You state alternate facts that said to your base "we (you) are being picked on".

Why would someone do that? Not from altruistic motives. They are created to gain power or an upper hand. To advance a brand. Advancing a brand is usually designed to put dollars in your

pocket or promote one's position.

So if you feel that you have been put down, then create some alternate facts (especially relating to social issues to keep it from looking too personal). Just put a light spin on the real truth. Give it some smell of truth and find a medium from which to publicly state your case. If you are lucky, as a bonus you might even negotiate to receive money in return.

The people or institution that you throw at will be hog tied from responding because to bring back the true picture or situation requires voluminous explanation and verbiage that no one wants to hear because in the conspiratorial mind they already know the truth.

It's called "being caught between a rock and a hard place".

The saying is "your laundry should not be aired in public". Unless of course you have an underlying selfish motive. Then you have to be careful about whose laundry ends up being aired.

This is my running on ramblings only and of course has no bearing on any real life happening. Just random thoughts from an old guy.

David M. Bishop
Haliburton



Have a thought, comment or
opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
mike@haliburtonpress.com

'Nobody's going to be left behind' as vaccine clinics begin

SUE TIFFIN

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The following are brief reports from a Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge district health unit press conference held March 17, and a board of health meeting held March 18.

One vaccination clinic in each Northumberland County and City of Kawartha Lakes began last week, with one vaccination clinic beginning in Haliburton County this week, and all six of the clinics set up throughout the region beginning April 5.

Dr. Ian Gemmill, acting medical officer of health, told board of health members last week that 1,000 doses had been given to Haliburton Highlands Health Services to use both for high-risk healthcare workers and also for people over the age of 80.

"I think if we had all the vaccine in the world we could clearly be immunizing faster," he said, noting the wait for availability of vaccine. "It's not hanging around in freezers, it's all being spoken for."

All long-term care residents who wish to have the vaccine have been vaccinated, said Gemmill, adding that the health unit would be looking into immunizations at retirement homes this week.

During the board of health meeting, it was announced that A.J. LaRue arena in Haliburton would be the second location for a vaccination clinic in Haliburton County, alongside S.G. Nesbitt arena in Minden.

Gemmill said the health unit was receiving about 6,000 vaccines a week - 1,000 vaccines per clinic per week - or about 200 per day if a clinic runs five days, which he said is "pretty meagre."

"I wish we had more vaccine to be able to do more people now, we don't," he said. "I'm really looking forward to the point in time where we can really ramp this up even more. We can do hundreds of people a day, maybe thousands of people a day, at six clinics, if we have the vaccine."

Gemmill has said numerous times that his priority is ensuring there is one vaccine for every appointment being made, so residents don't encounter a problem seen elsewhere in the province in which supply has not been available for appointments made.

"That's why I think a way of doing this bit by bit,

even though it may be frustrating for some of our residents, is a better way of doing it so that when they get an appointment they know they're going to get a shot," said Gemmill. "The message to the elderly people: Please be patient, everyone's going to get their vaccine. Be patient, everybody is going to get the chance to get this vaccine, nobody's going to be left behind."

Haliburton County reports increase in COVID-19 after case-free month

"In Haliburton [County], we've had some activity over the last little while," said Gemmill, in discussing cases in the health region which includes Haliburton County, City of Kawartha Lakes and Northumberland County. "About 15 per cent of the cases now have occurred in Haliburton County in the last 14 days. That's a little bit of a change because Haliburton had been relatively quiet for the better part of a month, actually so this is a new development."

At press time on March 22, there were 10 current cases of confirmed COVID-19 in Haliburton County, including one case in a staff member at Hyland Crest long-term care home in Minden and two cases in students at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School. Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, 66 local cases have been confirmed. One variant of concern has been identified.

"It does, however, reinforce a point that I really want to make with [media] and the public, which is that, you never know where this pandemic is going, and just because things are quiet for awhile doesn't mean it's over. It just means that it's quiet for awhile," Gemmill said.

He added that in the past few weeks there have been more variants of concern - more highly transmissible mutations of the virus - reported in the health unit region, as well as in the province - about half of the cases reported in Ontario are identified as variant cases.

"In this area it's not quite 50 per cent that are variants of concern, but ... we almost have to deal with it as though every case is a variant of concern."

As he does each week, Gemmill reminded the public that, "we're not out of the woods yet, things can change on a dime." He referenced outbreaks at a student residence in Peterborough and at Queen's University.

"It doesn't take very much, just a few ill-advised gatherings, and that kind of thing, and the next thing you know, we're putting out fires everywhere," he said.

Learn more online

For more information, watch the most recent Talk with the Doc session, held March 16, or sign up for the next session on March 30 at <https://www.hkpr.on.ca/2021/02/09/sign-up-for-talk-with-the-doc-virtual-town-hall/>. Visit the health unit's website at <http://www.hkpr.on.ca> for most updated information, including a Click and Connect feature that offers residents the chance to ask a question, report a complaint or check the most recent case count and the number of vaccines given.

Sliding into spring

Experienced and decorated ice racer George Jones, left, slides his motocross bike with studded tires with Highlands residents Doug Diesel and Josh Baker on a frozen Grass Lake on March 14 in Haliburton. There are plans for a race series next year, which will be organized by the newly formed Haliburton Ice Riders and George Jones. Expect scheduled dates to be posted later in the year. Contact and like Haliburton Ice Riders on Facebook for more information or contact Steve Stiles at stilesmarine@outlook.com. Photo by Tanya Stiles



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Citizen scientists find common goal against Eurasian watermilfoil

SUE TIFFIN

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Eurasian Watermilfoil Working Group is hoping that in spreading awareness of the invasive species, the spreading of the aquatic plant itself can be reduced.

The group, a sub-committee of the Drag and Spruce Lakes Property Owners' Association (DSLPOA), has been working to control the local spread of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) with a project that has raised more than \$40,000 toward a \$50,000 goal so far through donations from property owners.

"It is an all-hands-on-deck kind of problem that will benefit from if we're all helping out," said Jim Miners, vice-president of the DSLPOA and member of the working group. "It's an important project, it's a project that needs everybody on board to support it. We're happy to have people's donations, we're happy to have people's involvement as volunteers, and all we can do is ask."

Eurasian watermilfoil is an invasive, alien aquatic plant that is a perennial native in Europe, Asia and northern Africa but has spread to every continent except Antarctica, according to a presentation made by Miners to help educate lake associations, organizations and the general public about the plant. It was first identified in North America in the 19th century, and in Ontario in Lake Erie, in 1961. A look at EDDMapS, which tracks invasive species sightings, shows that the plant is prevalent throughout North America – and four known outbreaks on Drag Lake are included in that tally.

The first outbreak in Drag Lake was identified near Harris Beach, in 2015, by Mike Podmore, who passed away earlier this year.

"He was dedicated to this project, he was known on the lake as somebody who loved the lake and everything about the lake, and wanted to do what he could to protect the natural beauty and the natural elements of the lake," said Miners.

Podmore brought the plant to the attention of lake steward Bert Bicknell, who began educating himself on Eurasian watermilfoil and finding out what others were doing to control it.

"Most lake associations who are dealing with this problem are treating this as a problem they are going to be dealing with forever," said Miners. "It's not a matter of getting rid of EWM, it's a matter of controlling the spread and the growth of EWM. And most lake associations will tell you, if you can control it, you've been successful."

The problems posed by the perennial, which grows under the water surface, are many: it spreads quickly and grows densely, causes odour as it decays, impedes growth of native plants and harms habitat, and can cause swimmers and boats to become entangled.

"There are stories of boats going into [Frenchman's Bay in Pickering] and just stopping dead because the motor's tangled, or the sailboat can't get through," said Miners. "It's not a pretty story."

Additionally, it can cause waterfront property value to drop as much as 15 per cent.

After understanding the importance of dealing with EWM outbreaks, the working group began researching and planning to control its spread, working with technical support from The Canadian Centre for Invasive Species, The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, U-Links (Trent U and Fleming College) and other lake associations.

"One of the things we've learned is that anyone work-



Eurasian watermilfoil, an invasive aquatic plant, is identifiable by feathery-like green leaves with 12 or more thread-like segments, as seen here. /Photo by Mike Podmore

ing on this for more than a year is happy to share with anybody else, what they've discovered," said Miners.

The DSLPOA applied to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in 2017 to allow the property owners' association to install biodegradable matting over the outbreak at Harris Beach to reduce photosynthesis and thus suppress further growth and propagation of the weed, a solution that is deemed most effective (cutting the plants risks further outbreaks with the creation of fragments). That project was approved in 2019 for a very specific time period – between July 16 and October 1, in 2020 and required extensive work in enlisting volunteers, fundraising and finding commercial dive teams who could help lay coconut fibre matting on top of the watermilfoil to see how it might be controlled from spreading further out. With that done – 13 coconut fibre mats were laid over one outbreak – the group plans to monitor if the project was successful – in part with an underwater camera that can give the group a close-up look at how the cover is working. If it proves to be effective, it's one the group hopes to use again on the other outbreaks of the weed that have been identified in Drag Lake.

"We're turning everybody on the lake who's interested into a citizen scientist. Get out there in your kayak, get out there in your canoe, or your paddleboard or whatever, go along the shoreline, here's what you're looking for. The pictures are pretty clear, it's going to look like this, and if you find it, don't break it, whatever you do. Let us know. Citizen science is a good term, we're also seeing it as a great community builder around the two lakes. There's a common goal now for people to get behind."

That common goal has led to 252 concerned property owners helping to contribute to the fund – some more than once – to keep EWM under control, with Miners saying that 250 property owners still have yet to contribute.

"We're trying to be creative in terms of getting them to accept that this is a problem that everyone needs to be concerned about," he said. "This sounds a bit trite. But

the weed is working 24/7. It's planning what it's going to do this summer. So if we're not planning what we're going to do this summer, we don't stand a chance."

Besides protecting Drag Lake, Miners said it's important to help stop the weed from spreading into Spruce Lake, and to other lakes through boats that are used on different waterways. He believes that it's not necessarily a problem only affecting Drag Lake.

"If we continue to find other outbreaks, and we're to report all of them, then all of a sudden we look like the worst lake in Haliburton County on [the EDDMapS tracker]," he said. "It's a fine line. Ask me if I believe there's EWM in every lake in Haliburton County and I will say, I think it's more likely that it's in every lake than that it's not in every lake. People don't know what they're looking for. We didn't know what we were looking for, here."

Miners has added grant writing to his to-do list, looking for funding support to help projects like what the DSLPOA has initiated. While the efforts in the past year have been successful, he wants to ensure the project is sustainable, without property owners fundraising each year if more outbreaks occur.

"It's life's worth, job security," he said of the weed. "If you're in the business of controlling EWM, you've got work for a lifetime. It's not a short-term project by any means, and everybody who gets into it, every lake association who gets into it finds that out very quickly."

On March 23, Miners and Rick Wesselman are presenting to Dysart council regarding how the EWM group and the municipality might work together on the project. On March 28, the EWM group is hosting a Zoom meeting with representatives of Dysart council, the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners' Associations and Dysart lake associations to further discuss the project.

For more information about the local Eurasian watermilfoil project or the Drag and Spruce Lakes Property Owners' Association, visit <https://www.dragandsprucelakes.ca/>.



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Roadside moose put down by MNRF

SUE TIFFIN

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A moose making frequent visits to the side of Hwy. 118 was put down by Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry after staff determined the animal likely had brain worm.

Reports of the moose laying beside the road in the area for approximately three weeks came in to the Bancroft District MNRF on March 16 and 17, said Jolanta Kowalski, MNRF spokesperson.

"The ministry is aware of a sick moose near Highway 118 and Pike Line, near Haliburton," Maimoona Dinani, MNRF media relations officer, told the *Echo* on March 17.

Ministry staff attended the scene to assess the condition of the moose.

"Public safety will always be our number one priority," said Dinani. "Ministry staff will work with police services to determine an appropriate plan of action if the moose is posing an immediate threat to public safety."

Late in the afternoon on March 17, it was determined the animal had brain worm, and was a risk for causing car collisions due to its close proximity to the highway.

"MNRF observations of the moose on site indicated that this moose appeared to have several symptoms that are consistent with brain worm including: lack of fear of humans, appearing dazed, not able to move without difficulty, being slow, lethargic and wobbly, continuously licking lips and shaking its head," said Kowalski. "Observations also confirmed that the muscular condition of the animal was poor, especially around the neck area. Given the proximity of the animal to a road, the potential hazard and risk to public safety was apparent."

The animal was dispatched by MNRF staff while OPP mitigated traffic in the area.



Haliburton resident Jeff Strano took this photo of a moose just east of Glamorgan Road on Hwy 118 that had been frequenting the area for the past few weeks. MNRF staff attended the scene to assess the condition of the moose, and determining the animal likely had brain worm, put it down on the afternoon of March 17. /Photo by Jeff Strano

"Brain worm is often fatal for moose when infected and there is no known cure," said Kowalski. "As brain worm was suspected, along with public safety considerations, dispatch was the most humane and safest decision to minimize risk to public safety ... Public safety is the ministry's number one priority. Ministry staff work with police services to determine an appropriate plan of action in situations where an animal is posing an immediate

threat to personal safety. Dispatch of wildlife is a last resort, but is sometimes needed to ensure public safety."

Brain worm itself does not pose a risk to humans. It is most common in areas with high deer density, as deer are the primary host of the parasite, with snails and slugs being the intermediate host, said Kowalski. The carcass of the moose was fed to the wolves at the Haliburton Forest Wolf Centre.

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Haliburton Curling Club happy with year

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

President Kent Milford said the Haliburton Curling Club has, to this point in their season, had a good year considering the challenges related to the pandemic.

It's clear what curling has meant to the 125 members this year, he said.

"What we established this year is, clearly, the competitive edge of curling is not what it's about. It wasn't really about the socialization after curling. Very few people stayed after taking advantage of the bar and one can understand that. What they needed was to get out of the house and get a bit of exercise and a little bit of long distance socialization and probably just to relieve the boredom more than anything else and we haven't had any negative feedback from that perspective whatsoever. I think people have been thankful about the opportunity to do that," he said.

Well short of the usual 240 curlers, the club has made it work in terms of keeping a good financial standing and everyone healthy without a single transmission at the club, the president said.

Milford said having close to 25 curlers, who would have curled at the Minden Curling Club, was a big benefit to the local club this year.

"I'm sure they will return to Minden next year when that club reopens hopefully. For this year it helped us a little bit too because it helped to defray some of the costs for opening with the 100 or so Haliburton curlers," he said.

A curler at Minden since 2003, Jane Boyd enjoyed her experience this season.

"The Haliburton club has been very welcoming and we are very appreciative. Being able to curl this winter has been a welcome change from being confined to our home," she wrote in an email, referring to herself and her husband, Scotty.

Milford said the club's finances were also assisted by public funding, which included federal government employment subsidies for staff. Regional funding was also available, but was not taken because the club felt it would take away from other deserving recipients in the community, he adds.

Before the season, the club asked its membership about having a season this year, referencing how it would be possible to operate if there were 100 curlers willing to pay a "flat fee," which is two-thirds of a typical fee.

"We feel we could defray the costs, and open up the club. The club will not likely recoup all of its costs, but it will allow us to provide you with a curling experience and still protect the interests of the individuals who feel its safe or not to curl," he said.

In light of the COVID-19 cases at the high school recently, the club asked their high school members to not curl the week of discovery. The club asked for direction from the local health unit about any new actions the club needed to implement related to the high school outbreak, but have not heard back and have proceeded with caution.

"We can never lose sight at the curling club that the average age is 66 years old. Because of that and a number of people who are at high risk for COVID-19, we have [implemented] every single protocol we could think of to keep them safe, we implemented," he said, referring to the start of the season.



Curlers play while wearing masks on Friday afternoon, March 19 at the Haliburton Curling Club. With just a little more than a month left in the season, the club's president Kent Milford is happy with how things have gone during the pandemic, which has brought COVID-19 protocols of screening before entering, mask wearing on and off the ice and only one sweeper for a rock at a time. /DARREN LUM Staff

He adds, the club operated under the COVID-19 response framework of Orange-Restrict zone even when the province announced this area was within the Yellow-Protect status. This went back to even before the season began when the club decided go "above and beyond" what the Ontario Curling Association guidelines for COVID-19 were in September, which stated curlers wear masks in the club, but not on the ice. Curlers at the Haliburton club have worn masks on and off the ice since the start.

It was this approach that allowed for an easy transition when the area experienced stricter COVID-19 protocols before the shutdown, Milford said.

"Just by doing that when we started the first week of December people were already implementing all those protocols when things started to get worse in the second wave, so it wasn't additional adjustments that we had to make, or it wasn't trying to make an adjustment after a potential issue had happened. We're glad and we're thankful we had done that from the word go," he said.

This included disinfecting, sanitizing between groups and allowing for days between draws to pass.

The club's season typically goes until the end of March, but this year with the two shutdowns it will be extended until April 30.

"That way people will have had three full months of curling provided we don't get shutdown again," he said.

The club faced criticism before the season started when it announced it would not permit competitive traveling youth curlers to practice at the club. Milford said this was based on keeping everyone safe. As the result of what's happened at the high school, the club feels vindicated by the decision. When it's safe again, he said, the club welcomes the traveling competitive curlers back, and is currently evaluating the situation with their youth curlers related to having them play again.

After this year's challenges, Milford said the atmosphere at the club is positive.

"I truly haven't heard a negative complaint and I tried to solicit as many opinions as possible. I received many compliments and comments of thanks that we got the opportunity to do something and relieve the boredom with a bit of exercise," he said. "Many people said you jumped through many hoops to be able to try and allow us to have a safe curling season and we appreciate that. That's probably the single biggest response we got time and time again."

As the club is nearing the summer and vaccinations are administered, there is hope for a return to normal, Milford said.

"Hopefully we can proceed as usual, but it's an experience I'm sure you've heard that many times over," he said.

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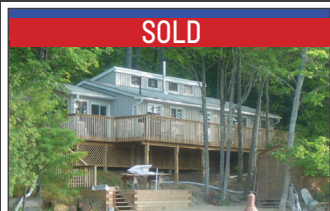
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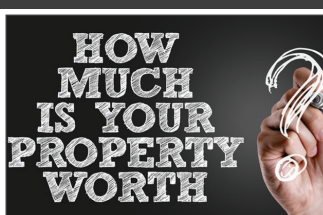
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455-2054



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NEW LISTING



Karen Nimigon**
457-6505

Haliburton Lake \$299,000

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- Nicely treed, gentle slope to lake
- Close to ski hill, golf, shopping



NEW LISTING



Kelly Kay
705-457-8841
Kirsten Rae*
286-2138 x 230

Minden Lake \$849,000

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- 2004 build & completely updated
- 165 ft waterfront, 0.89 acres
- West exposure, sand beach



SOLD



Darlene Reil*
447-2055

4 Plex - Loop Rd \$449,900

- 4 Plex with good tenants.
- Walk to all amenities.
- Across the road from the lake

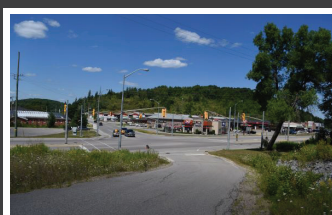


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Melanie Vigrass*
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Kennis River \$449,000

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Recent provincial legislation narrows the scope for environmental protection efforts

WILLIAM CHAPPLE

Special to the Echo

In December 2020, the Ontario government passed Bill 229 titled the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act [Budget Measures]. Contained

within this Bill is Schedule 6, which outlines significant amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act. These changes include empowering the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to overturn decisions made by conservation authorities to grant or deny development permits. The Ministry reserves the right to issue a Minister's Zoning Order

(MZO) for development, forcing conservation authorities to issue permits even if evidence shows the development could negatively affect human safety and protection of species at risk. The ruling removes conservation authorities as a public body, limiting them from appealing land use decisions. Developers may also build within key ecological features that would otherwise be protected, if they pay a fee.

To understand the implications of this ruling, it is important to comprehend the role and purpose of conservation authorities in Canada. In 1946, the Conservation Authorities Act was passed as concerns were rising about the state of renewable resources in the province. Poor resource management practices resulted in flooding and degradation. The provincial government adopted the integrated watershed management approach to provide watershed management and planning authority as we see presently in the 36 conservation authorities across Ontario.

According to an analysis of Bill 229 by the Canadian Environmental Law Association, "the majority of the Schedule 6 amendments are regressive in nature and are completely contradictory to fulfilling ... the purpose of the Conservation Authorities Act." As up to 95 per cent of Ontarians reside within watersheds, the responsible management of said watersheds should be scientifically driven to protect residents from the threats of flooding, erosion, and other safety concerns. The public did not get a chance to support or dispute Schedule 6 before it was passed in December because these changes were proposed as part of a Budget Measures Act, which do not require public consultation under the Environmental Bill of Rights, 2007.

In the case of Haliburton County, there is no conservation authority in charge of efforts for the region. Because of this the County handles land use decisions, including issuing development permits, as guided by scientific research completed by independent organizations. The lack of conservation authority does not mean, however, that Haliburton County will not be affected by Schedule 6 of Bill 229.

The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) is a privately owned, volunteer-based organization with similar goals of conservation and protection of natural systems as conservation authorities. Greg Wickware, Chair of the HHLT, describes the possible repercussions this legislation could have on the Haliburton area.

"Schedule 6 opens the door to replacing science-based watershed management with politically motivated decision-making and it puts the province's remaining wetlands and forests, and the wildlife that depend on those habitats, at risk," he explains.

In the area, some wetland systems have been granted protection as Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW). Wickware highlights the danger Schedule 6 poses to these significant features.

"PSWs have the highest degree of protection, but with a [Minister's Zoning Order (MZO)] that protection can be eliminated. Protecting wetlands reduces the threat of flooding and replenishes our supply of drinking water. Wetlands capture and hold deep pockets of water in our landscape ... and replenish our groundwater tables." He goes on to express extreme concern that these wetlands and their ecological function could be negatively impacted by MZOs and decision makers without the scientific and technical expertise needed to make rational land use decisions.

Unfortunately, privately owned land trusts such as the HHLT do not have the

“

Schedule 6 opens the door to replacing science-based watershed management with politically motivated decision-making and it puts the province's remaining wetlands and forests, and the wildlife that depend on those habitats, at risk.

— Greg Wickware, chair of HHLT

financial or technical capacity to complete the same work as conservation authorities, and do not act as land use planners or managers. Still, the County relies on scientific research studies completed by land trusts to guide responsible decision making. "Improved wetland mapping, including floodplain mapping is extremely important," Wickware says as he describes the HHLT's current projects.

"HHLT's new wetland mapping layer is an important tool as it has been acknowledged by the County as the best accurate mapping for this and other planning decisions," he said.

Because there are no conservation authorities in Haliburton, the HHLT supports the County in making informed decisions that will protect provincially and biologically significant features and human security. Land trusts also play an important role in helping the federal government in achieving the goal of conserving 30 per cent of Canada's land and oceans by the year 2030. Bill 229, Schedule 6 seems to defy this ideal.

All five properties under the jurisdiction of the HHLT are protected as ecologically or biologically significant. With the threat of the MZO as described above, Wickware says, "Land Trusts will certainly have a role to play as zoning order permits are issued on lands that fall within their communities."

Land trusts, especially those working without the support of a local Conservation Authority, must be very vigilant to the possible implications of Schedule 6. Wickware suggests this ruling will heighten the alert system of groups who are passionate about conservation. These people will not make it easy for a minister to override scientific recommendations on a consistent basis, Wickware says. The Conservation authorities will continue to provide recommendations based on scientific evidence, even though much of their power to act on these recommendations has been narrowed.

Wickware notes that the HHLT prides itself in providing volunteer opportunities as well as recreational facilities for locals. A healthy environment contributes to a healthy body and mental state especially during the pandemic, and the HHLT offers many naturalized areas for public use in their Dahl Forest and Barnum Creek Nature Reserve properties.

If you are a budding citizen scientist, volunteering with the HHLT is a great chance to make a difference for the environment in your community. Information about these opportunities is available on the HHLT website* and eNewsletter. In the face of environmental challenges like Bill 229, Schedule 6, it is up to us to come together and do what we can to protect the important ecosystems of Haliburton County and area.

For more information on HHLT, visit www.haliburtonlandtrust.ca.

Crossword brought to you by

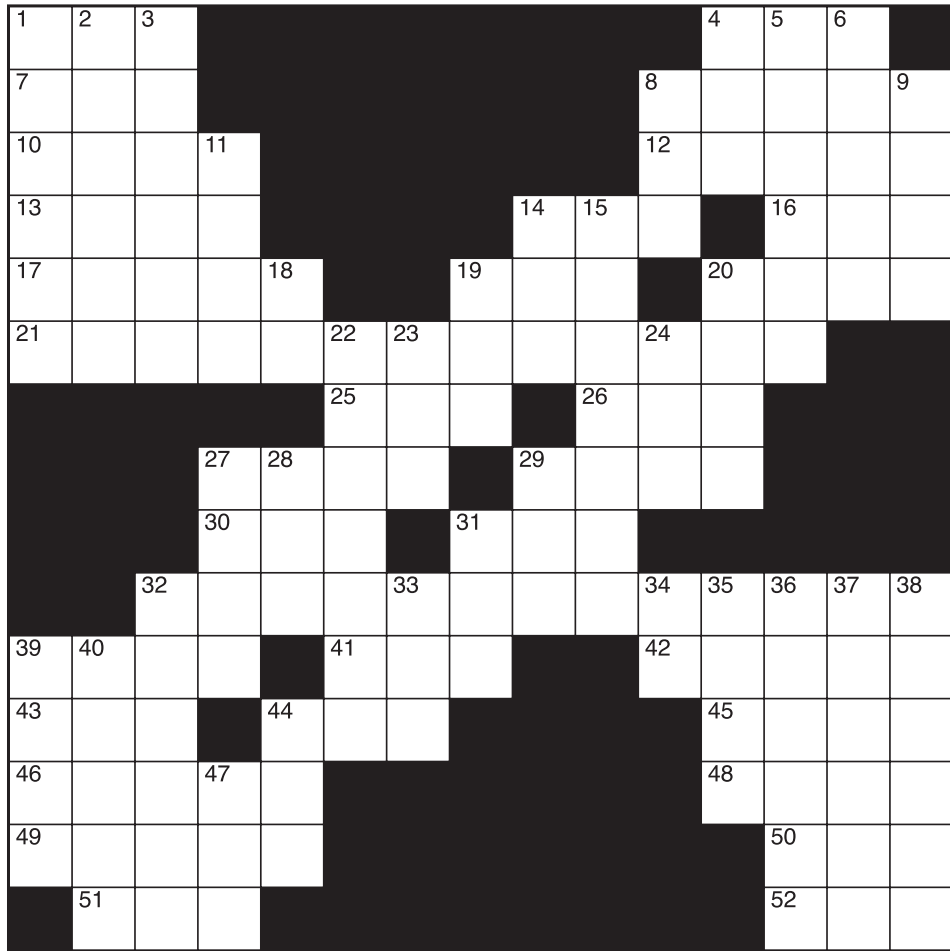
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- CLUES ACROSS

 - 1. Ocean surface indicator (abbr.)
 - 4. American time
 - 7. Satisfaction
 - 8. Diving duck
 - 10. Very small amount
 - 12. Metrical units
 - 13. An ignorant or foolish person
 - 14. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
 - 16. It may sting you
 - 17. Turn outward
 - 19. Perform on stage
 - 20. "CSI" actor George
 - 21. Localities
 - 25. Make a choice
 - 26. Indicates position
 - 27. One of Thor's names
 - 29. Indian musical rhythmic pattern
 - 30. "The Raven" author
 - 31. Take in solid food
 - 32. Legendary QB
 - 39. Sorrels
 - 41. Organization of nations
 - 42. Texas pharmaceutical
- company

 - 43. Mathematical term
 - 44. Expression of disappointment
 - 45. Abba __, Israeli politician
 - 46. Hide away
 - 48. Salad restaurant
 - 49. Daughters of Boreas (mythology)
 - 50. Men's fashion accessory
 - 51. Political action committee
 - 52. Unhappy

CLUES DOWN

 - 1. Make unhappy
 - 2. Heard the confession of
 - 3. Capital of Taiwan
 - 4. Fiddler crab
 - 5. Brazilian dances
 - 6. Fit with device to assist breathing
 - 8. Brother or sister
 - 9. Pastries
 - 11. "Lone Survivor" director Peter
- 14. Boat type (abbr.)
 - 15. Apertures (biology)
 - 18. Suffix
 - 19. Creative endeavor
 - 20. Icelandic poem
 - 22. Spanish dances
 - 23. Town in Central Italy
 - 24. Cars need it
 - 27. Mimics
 - 28. Rocky peak
 - 29. Cigarette (slang)
 - 31. One point south of due east
 - 32. Soap actress Braun
 - 33. Large domesticated wild ox
 - 34. Island nation
 - 35. Appear
 - 36. Addictive practices
 - 37. Loss of control of one's body
 - 38. Type of poster
 - 39. Greek mountain
 - 40. Funny person
 - 44. One and only
 - 47. Pouch

Answers on page 16

Haliburton Hockey Haven to run at A.J. LaRue this summer

from page 1

arena from April 5 until June 12 at which point, it will move to another location yet to be determined ... Dysart et al is pleased that [HKPRDHU] listened to our concerns and those expressed by the public and has agreed to a solution that works for all parties. This means that summer ice will be back in and everything should be back to normal in time for Highland Storm and other leagues this fall."

Dysart et al Deputy-Mayor Pat Kennedy, who sits on the municipality's emergency control group and is a retired EMS director of the County of Haliburton said he received both complaints from individuals, with comments including the health and wellbeing of kids and lack of alternate activities, and also had some conversations with local organizations.

"Some of the major concerns included the lack of alternate activities available for our kids, closing both arenas at the same time that have the capability to start making ice early, and why wasn't another site chosen," he said. "I didn't directly receive many complaints - 25 or so - however social media was certainly active and complaints were many."

Though a petition with 65 signatures at press time has reportedly been circulating, Kennedy has not received that directly.

Staff had similar concerns as those expressed by the public, he said.

"Dysart resisted repeated requests from early February to pull the ice immediately to provide the arena as one of two permanent sites in Haliburton County," said Kennedy. "Numerous other facilities and a number of businesses were contacted to see if a viable alternative site could be provided. The major impediments to securing alternate sites were traffic control, accessibility, stable Wi-Fi and cell coverage, and an inability to commit for up to six months. The decision to finally agree to use of the arena was driven by a time deadline that the arena be activated. Mass immunization sites needed to be confirmed as they are planning on beginning in early April [subject to vaccine availability]. This meant that a decision had to be made last week in order to get the ice out in time."

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts echoed Kennedy, saying he had been a strong voice for the community in his role on the committee.

"We had been asked since early February to take the ice out but were hesitant as we knew the repercussions that would cause," she said, adding: "We also knew the over 80-year-olds would be done at the Haliburton Family Medical Centre so there was no immediate need to make that decision. Dysart has provided free exit tickets for this group who will be using the medical centre parking lot. We asked [the health unit] to look at several other options, both municipal and private businesses, but their preference came back to the arena. Fortunately after much discussion, we have been able to offer them the arena from April 5 until June 12, meaning we can go ahead with summer ice."

Vaccinations for those 80-and-older start this week at the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team medical centre in Haliburton, and are to open April 5 at the Minden and Haliburton arenas. They began on March 16 in Cobourg and March 18 in Lindsay, while clinics in Fenelon Falls and Campbellford begin April 5. The health unit has hoped each county in the region will have two sites for vaccinations, ideally within less than 30 minutes driving time for residents.

Kennedy said that in 2017, the municipality had signed a memorandum of

understanding with the health unit to authorize the use of the arena for the purpose of holding mass health protection clinics.

"Not a criticism, as no one in 2017 could have foreseen the COVID pandemic nor the anticipated length of time the arena could be used," said Kennedy. "Arenas are chosen for a number of reasons including: large parking area, usually well defined entry and exits, high ceilings, accessible washrooms, dressing rooms adjacent to the ice surface can be used to store supplies, and a large surface area to provide holding areas and to ensure sufficient space to maintain distances."

From now until April 18, Andrea Mueller, events and recreation coordinator, said the Highland Storm, nine men's leagues, youth figure skating, public skating, line dancing and regularly occurring weekly rentals plus private rentals were scheduled to use the arena.

Typically, the ice is out at A.J LaRue Arena from April 19 to June 12 for plant maintenance - normally ball hockey is running, but the municipality did not make preparations for it this year.

From June 29 to Labour Day, Haliburton Hockey Haven, men's leagues, regularly occurring private rentals, local camps, weeknight programs for youth in the community, public skating and private rentals typically take place at the arena.

When asked about the decision to reopen the arena with summer ice rather than use it as a vaccination clinic throughout the summer months, Kennedy said: "There are a number of reasons why summer ice and fall ice be maintained if at all possible. Not only the social, exercise and recreational benefits of having summer ice available to the public, but also the need to ensure that the Highland Storm hockey organization (with over 200 kids enrolled) would be operational in time for their winter schedule. Dysart also has a contract with Hockey Haven to provide summer ice. It was a critical part of the effort to find a solution with HKPRDHU, as we recognize the importance of summer ice being a critical part of the viability of that organization and to ensure compliance with our contractual agreement."

Haliburton Hockey Haven, a private sports camp, has a multi-year contract with Dysart et al.

"In discussions with [the local health unit] they were very sympathetic to our situation and wanted to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution that will still serve the public need but also lessen a possible conflict with our contractual agreement with Hockey Haven," said Kennedy.

Haliburton Hockey Haven did not run last year, due to provincial regulations as a result of the pandemic that saw summer camps remain closed. This year, owner Troy Binnie said the camp plans to run and is awaiting the final protocols to follow, including capacity limits.

"I did receive a call from the town on Thursday of the arena being used as a vaccination centre and thankfully received better information from Andrea Roberts [on] Friday that the decision had been made that the ice would be available for us and the community for the up-and-coming summer," said Binnie. "I would like to thank all of the community and town council members who fought to change the health department's decision and come up with an alternative location."

Binnie said he and staff are preparing for "an exciting year back at camp on Kashagawigamog, A.J. LaRue arena and the Highland Golf Course."

"Without ice at the arena, HHH would not be able to run our traditional summer camp so we would have most likely

been closed for the summer again, which probably would not have fared well for us having to be closed for two years in a row," said Binnie. "With kids not being able to play much or any hockey in some areas this winter I know a lot of our campers were getting very excited with the hopes of getting back on the ice again for a normalized hockey practice and scrimmages."

A post about the initial announcement on the Highland Storm's Facebook page shares concerns and criticism from parents as well as community members

about there being no access to an arena this summer (S.G. Nesbitt arena in Minden has not opened yet and is also being used as a vaccination clinic, and Wilberforce's Lloyd Watson arena is closed for the season).

"My main concern was regarding the youth of the community," said Grade 11 student and Highland Storm player Darian Maddock. "I know that throughout the pandemic kids haven't really been able to do anything. I know that we

see NO DECISION page 18



Municipality of Dysart et al

135 Maple Ave., P.O. Box 389,
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0
Telephone: (705) 457-1740
Email: info@dysartetal.ca
Website: www.dysartetal.ca

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

- DATE: Wednesday, April 14th 2021
- TIME: 1:00 am.
- LOCATION: The Committee of Adjustment will be held as an electronic meeting only.
The meeting will be recorded through the conferencing application and live streamed to YouTube.

APPLICATIONS:

1. D13-MV-2021-005- Burk & Bain

- The following variances are requested to legalize the location of an existing private garage and three accessory buildings on a lot located in the WR4 zone:
 - a) A decrease to the provisions of Section 5.2 to permit a private garage to have a minimum interior lot line setback of 0.48 metres (1.57 feet) as opposed to required minimum of 1 metres (3.28 feet).
 - b) A variance to the provisions of Section 5.2 to permit a third accessory building to have an area of 23 square metres (240 square feet) as opposed to the required 10 square metres (108 square feet).
- Location: Plan 352, Lot 19 in the geographic Township of Harburn, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (1752 Curry Road).

2. D13-2021-007- Hill

- The following variance is requested to permit a third accessory building to exceed the permitted area on a lot in the WR4L zone:
 - a) A variance to the provisions of Section 5.2 to permit a third accessory building to have an area of 20.5 square metres (216 square feet) as opposed to the required 10 square metres (108 square feet).
- Location: Concession 1, Part Lot 7, RP 19R5841, Parts 6 to 11 in the geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (1074 Tippy's Trail).

3. D13-MV-2021-009- Werry

- The following variance is requested to permit a private cabin (yurt) to have an exterior side lot line setback of 3 metres (9.84 ft.) located on a lot in the RU1 zone:
 - a) A decrease to section 9.2 to permit a private cabin (yurt) to have an exterior side lot line setback of 3 metres (9.84 ft.) as opposed to the permitted 13.5 metres (44.3 ft.).
- Location: Part Lot 10, Concession 5 in the geographic Township of Harburn, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (Harburn Road).

Council passed By-law 2020-69 to amends the Committee of Adjustment of the Municipality of Dysart et al's Procedural By-law to permit electronic participation in meetings. **There will not be an in-person meeting; this meeting will be conducted in an electronic format only.**

For more information about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, contact the Deputy Secretary-Treasurer at dhicks@dysartetal.ca.

ANY PERSON is entitled to attend the hearing to express his/her views about these applications or may be represented by an agent for that purpose. If you do not attend the hearing the Committee may proceed in your absence and you will not be entitled to any further notice of the proceedings. The Committee will accept oral and written submissions. **A copy of the decision will be sent to the applicant, the agent and to each person who has filed with the Secretary Treasurer a written request for notice of the decision.**

FURTHER INFORMATION: including specific information about the zone provisions affected by each application, and electronic meeting process is available from the Planning and Land Information Department at the Municipal Office by appointment only (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or by phoning 705-457-1740.

Jeff Iles
Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment

PhD student launches farming survey on cover crops

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A PhD student from the University of Manitoba wants to engage with farmers from Haliburton County to gather information for a study he's working on focusing on the use of cover crops across Ontario.

Callum Morrison has dedicated the past two years of his life towards investigating cover crops and the potential benefits they provide both to farmers and the environment. Cover crops are generally planted to cover soil in a farmer's field rather than for the purpose of being harvested.

"This is a really important study, because cover crops are an expanding area of interest," Morrison told the *Echo*. "They have tremendous potential to benefit the environment and soils. Governments are starting to watch and take notice too of farmers that are using cover crops. Down in the States, the government is actually incentivizing cover crop use... That could be something we eventually start to see [in Canada] too."

In an effort to hear how Ontario farmers are using cover crops, Morrison launched an online survey via SurveyMonkey to gauge responses. At the time of speaking with the *Echo*, Morrison had received responses from 416 farmers. The survey will be available online until April 2.

There are only two regions in which Morrison has not yet had a response – Muskoka and Haliburton County.

"It's important for us to engage with all types of stakeholders in the industry across all regions. The north is a region that is important. Haliburton and Muskoka, the farmers and the information they have possess great value to the study," Morrison said. "If I'm doing research into Ontario, I can't exactly miss out part of Ontario."

By the time he's done, Morrison hopes to have engaged with at least 30 farmers from all regions. Far from acting as a lone agent, his study has been backed by 13 different organizations and associations across the province, including the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Grain Farmers of Ontario, the Ecological Farmers of Ontario, the Ontario government and the Ontario Soil Network.

This latest survey follows in the footsteps of a similar project he carried out in western Canada last year, covering parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Upon completion of his survey in Ontario, he intends to study the data compiled in both and provide separate reports to industry leaders.

“

The north is a region that is important. Haliburton and Muskoka, the farmers and the information they have possess great value to the study.

— Callum Morrison

Some of the information he's received already has been quite interesting, Morrison notes, with only four per cent of farmers who participated in the survey and reported planting cover crops saying they saw a decrease in profits after doing so.

Around 30 per cent of farmers reported seeing no change, 30 percent said they saw a slight profit and 10 percent stated they saw a significant profit.

"While the profits are nice, we're hearing all sorts of other benefits that farmers are experiencing as a result of planting cover crops. The big one we're hearing over and over again is general improvements to soil health," Morrison said. "We're also hearing reports of reduced erosion, increased soil organic matter, reduced compaction, increased nitrogen, less weeds, more earthworms and some farmers are even saying they need less tillage."

Despite that, Morrison is adamant he is not necessarily an advocate for cover crops.

"I don't want to say if you grow cover crops you will see financial benefits, necessarily. What I'm doing here is not trying to prove cover crops are great, instead just prove what they are," Morrison said.

At this stage, he just wants to hear from as many farmers as possible to provide a more well-rounded and complete analysis of the use of cover crops in Ontario.

"I want to hear from people who have grown cover crops and those who haven't. Their farms can be of any size and any kind. They can be organic, non-organic, fruit and vegetables, livestock, grain – we just want to hear from farmers to expand our knowledge of cover cropping practices in Ontario," Morrison concluded.

For more information, or to access the online survey, visit surveyMonkey.com/r/ontariocovercrop.



Callum Morrison using a PRS2 moisture probe, which measures volumetric moisture at six different depths down to 1 meter, at a long-term cover cropping experiment in Carman, Manitoba which compares rotations using cover crops and those without cover crops. /Submitted photo



COUNTY OF HALIBURTON LAND DIVISION COMMITTEE NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 53(5)(a) of the Planning Act and Section 3, O.Reg. 197/96, as amended, that the following Applications for Consent have been submitted to the Haliburton County Land Division Committee, the consent granting authority in these matters.

AND FURTHER THAT An electronic meeting will be held **Monday, April 12, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.** to consider these applications.

AND FURTHER THAT this meeting will be held through remote electronic participation in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended by Bill 187, the Municipal Emergency Act, 2020 and an Order in Council of March 28, 2020, which amended the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act and prohibits organized public events of more than five people.

The media and the general public can view the Land Division Committee meeting webcast via the County of Haliburton YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/dwYH5xMLpnA>

AND FURTHER THAT these Applications for Consent will be heard by the Land Division Committee:

1. File No. H-001/21
Applicant: 2476563 Ontario Inc.
Location of the Property: Lots 7, 8, 16-18, Pt. Lots 11, 12, Pt. Block F Gregory Court, Pt. Blair Drive, Plan 557, Geographic Township of Dysart, Municipality of Dysart et al.
Nature of the Application: New Lot with Easement for Right-of-Way
2. File No. H-003/21 – H-007/21
Applicant: Catharine Gonnson
Location of the Property: Pt. Lot 5 & 6, Con. 1, Geographic Township of Dudley, Pt. Lot 6, Con. 33, Geographic Township of Dysart, Municipality of Dysart et al.
Nature of the Application: Easement for Right-of-Way

Additional information regarding the above applications is available for public inspection electronically by request during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

If a person or public body that files an appeal of a decision of the Land Division Committee in respect of the proposed consent does not make written submissions to the Land Division Committee before it gives or refuses to give a provisional consent, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal may dismiss the appeal.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Land Division Committee in respect of the proposed consent, you must make a written request to the undersigned.

Dated at the Township of Minden Hills this 23 day of March, 2021.

Lisa Gillan
Secretary-Treasurer
Haliburton County Land Division Committee
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0
Telephone: (705) 286-1333
or 1-866-886-8815, Ext. 248
Fax: (705) 286-4829
E-mail: lgillan@haliburtoncounty.ca

COVID-19 Contacts, Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by County

County	Current Cases Not Resolved	Current High Risk Contacts	Current Probable Cases	Confirmed Cases (Total to date)	Confirmed Cases Resolved (Total to Date)	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Confirmed Deaths (Total to date)	Probable Deaths (Total to date)
Haliburton	10	69	0	66	55	3	1	0
Kawartha Lakes	9	34	0	567	516	29	42	13
Northumberland	10	123	0	478	456	17	12	0
Total***	29	249	0	1,111	1,027	49	55	13

On March 22, four new confirmed cases of COVID-19 were reported in Haliburton County, a two-day total from Sunday and Monday, according to the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge district health unit. The total local current case count is reported as being 10, with 69 current high-risk contacts. One variant of concern is noted. For more information visit <http://www.hkpr.on.ca/>. Screenshot from HKPRDHU website

No decision yet on alternate vaccination clinic site

from page 15

looked forward to hockey and other recreation being open again for so long. Then when the arena finally opened back up, it was shut down again for vaccines. I just don't think that it is healthy for kids to be cooped up all the time. We need a place where we can get out and play, have activity and have fun with some friends, and the community centre is where they can go and do that."

Darian has been a long-time goalie with the Storm. "Youth sports and art programming is important to me because it's something that the youth of this county really need," said Darian, who is also student-assistant director for non-profit youth program Camexicanus. "Kids need a place where we can just go and pick up a stick and a ball or grab a guitar and be ourselves, a place that we can look forward to going to. In my experience hockey was something I always looked forward to, it was a chance to see my friends and burn off some energy, these programs are so important to the youth of this county. They keep our minds, bodies and souls engaged and healthy!"

Highland Storm president Jason Morissette said the year has not been an easy one for kids, including the Storm players.

"Because of COVID, and COVID certainly made for a challenging year and a very unusual year, but it's also

going to present challenges for next year, because everybody knows, really, that we're not going to be in a state of normal next year, either," he said.

The Storm announced on March 15 that the executive had voted unanimously to pause all Highland Storm minor hockey operations for two weeks from that day, to be proactive during current community spread of COVID-19 in Haliburton County, and are reviewing that decision this week. While normally their season was to end April 18, and typically they would get back to the ice in August, this year they planned to get back to the ice in September, rolling out the season by October or November. While the Storm do not need the as a team in June, they were upset that the arena would not be available in September, which means potentially they would not be prepared to organize scheduling with Muskoka-Parry Sound Hockey League in October, and their whole season could be in jeopardy.

"When the announcement came up from the municipality, we were very surprised about that, in that we were not consulted," said Morissette. "We did not know anything about this ... I don't think they had entirely all of the hockey input from Storm. They didn't really know what kind of impact that would have on the fall ... Dys-art's been awesome, they've been great, they've communicated well up until this particular situation, which we did express, we really would appreciate, if it's going to

affect programming, and it's going to be something that's really, really dramatic, like this announcement, that greater communication could certainly be used ahead of time."

Morissette said the team's goal as an association, and his as president, was to go through the season knowing they would be getting the association through a pandemic, and aiming for stability and continuity while carefully following public health guidelines.

"So those two things are really, really important," he said. "If we can keep our association strong and together and our members healthy, and our volunteers healthy, and everything good and sort of united and get that organized through the season as some kind of programming for kids, throughout this whole process, then that was really the number one goal."

In a conversation he had with Kennedy, who he praised for his advocacy, Morissette said he told him that the Storm was "totally supportive of the vaccination program, there's no question about that."

Morissette also said he cares for youth mental health, which he has seen diminished this year, though he said the Storm has been fortunate in that they've been able to play when other leagues, including MPS, as well as teams in Lindsay and Toronto-area have been shut down.

"Kids really need to have something positive down the road," he said. "It's a difficult situation for parents to go home to say, listen buddy, your hockey's not going to start for another month longer next year, and we don't know what that's going to mean. There's a lot of instability there. What youth need to hear is that the hope is, we're going to be back, and things will be hopefully better, and maybe the perimeters will be different because we're hoping the vaccines will roll out."

Morissette, a high school teacher, hopes the needs of youth in the community will be considered.

"What we do find often times, is that youth organizations, youth things, they don't necessarily get a lot of attention," said Morissette. "They're not adults, they're just kids, and sometimes we forget that they're still important, I know they don't make up as much of our population here, we don't have as many kids as we do older folks and seniors, but we need to really think about organizations that involve youth because they are our future, and we want to basically make things where young families are encouraged to participate and settle in our area and the area can grow and prosper and retain youth. Youth programs are something that I think we need to make sure we are cognizant of the value of them. If anything I would like to see more youth programs in our area."

Morissette said he's hopeful an alternative vaccination clinic can be set up that doesn't require use of ice pad space, as it has been in other communities.

At press time, a location that can open as a vaccination clinic in June when the A.J. LaRue arena closes had not been announced.

"A number of locations were presented to the health unit over the past eight weeks, however, all were deemed not appropriate by the health unit," said Kennedy. "The new agreement will get us into the nicer weather, and there should be additional more stable vaccines in use by then. This will allow us to explore more vaccination site options. Nothing has been confirmed as yet ... By mid-June it is felt that with the addition of more stable vaccines that a) more temporary sites such as fire halls, etc. could be used and b) the weather [will be] much more conducive to us setting up a more permanent site such as a large drive-through tent in the municipal parking lot similar to what is happening in other locations [such as Lindsay]."

Kennedy said a number of local businesses had been "more than happy to cooperate on an as-needed basis subject to availability, but understandably unable to commit for an extended block of time. One such business that needs to be recognized is Pinestone who made their ballroom available this week for a HHHS immunization clinic for first responders."

"None of the decisions we have had to make from the beginning of the pandemic have been taken lightly, and all of them have been done in a committee structure so there is a lot of bouncing thoughts back and forth before there is consensus," said Roberts. "We all want to do our best for the community and ensure everyone can get their vaccine when their turn comes. I am hopeful that with the temperature stable vaccines, the ability for pharmacies to disperse, and with some pop-up clinics this summer, as well as having the S.G. Nesbitt arena confirmed, we will have ample opportunity to get our vaccines."

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LOOKING FOR DYNAMIC & MEANINGFUL WORK? Central Food Network is seeking a Client Services & Volunteer Coordinator! Full job description at www.centralfoodnetwork.org. Email cover letter and resume to tina@centralfoodnetwork.org



Cottage Country
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We are looking for energetic people to join our team on the lumber sales desk. Responsibilities include customer service, inventory control and product merchandising. Candidates should have a good general knowledge of building products and have effortless keyboarding skills.

Please submit your resume to either:
cleve@emmersonlumber.com or
ryan@cottagecbs.com

Emmerson Lumber Limited-Haliburton
Cottage Country Building Supplies - Carnarvon

650

OBITUARIES



Leopoldina "Leo" Dobrzensky (Resident of Haliburton, Ontario)



Peacefully with her daughter by her side on Thursday evening, March 18, 2021 at Haliburton Hospital in her 95th year. Beloved wife of the late Jenda Dobrzensky. Loving mother of John, Zdislava and Margaret. Fondly remembered by her grandchildren Anna, Jan, Leopoldine and Sophie and by her great grandchildren Jan, Paul, Eugenie, Zitha, Sarah, Alice, Mathilde, Astrid, Alexandre and Gabriel. Predeceased by her daughter Helen, her son Charles, and by sisters Maria, Amalie, Rosa and by her grandson Edward.

Our family mourns this exceptional woman who overcame tremendous upheavals throughout her life and always with dignity and courage. Her generous & warm hearted spirit found enjoyment in countless areas - but especially, in gardening, painting and in classical music. She loved & embraced the Haliburton Highlands - whose natural beauty & people inspired her to write two books on its history *Fragments Of A Dream - Pioneering In Dysart Township and Haliburton Village* and *They Worked and Prayed Together - Italians In Haliburton County*. Her legacy also lives on in the donation of Barnum Creek Nature Reserve and in the many lives that she so gently touched.

Visitation & Mass of Christian Burial

Friends are invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario on Tuesday afternoon, March 23, 2021 from 1 - 3 p.m. by appointment only. Please reserve your place below. A Mass of Christian Burial will take place at ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA CHURCH 27 Victoria St. Haliburton, Ontario on Wednesday morning, March 24, 2021 at 11 o'clock. Masks must be worn. To join the service virtually, click the following link ten minutes prior to service time <https://join.skype.com/t3NDIC9SzAmh> As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Pregnancy Care Center, Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation or the Volunteer Dental Outreach for Haliburton County would be appreciated by the family.

www.communityfuneralhomes.com

In Loving Memory of

John Ernest Pentney



Passed away peacefully at Hyland Crest Senior Citizens Home, Minden on Saturday, March 13, 2021, in his 87th year.

Beloved husband of the late Minnie and Eileen. Dear father of John and Linda, Dave and Bonnie, Lynne and Wayne. Dear grandpa of Don, Leanne, Jeffrey, Chad, Jason, Katie, great grandpa of Darcy, Jordan, Tyler, Saphire, Griffin, Kit, Remi and great great grandpa of Deagen and Greyson. Fondly remembered by his family and friends.

The Family of John would like to acknowledge the kind, compassionate and loving care provided to their dad by the staff of Hyland Crest Senior Citizens Home, Minden. They are forever grateful.

A Private Family Graveside Service will take place at a later date in the spring. Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com



MARY CATHELEEN (KAY) TOWNSEND

passed away at Hastings Centennial Manor on March 16, 2021 with her daughters by her side following a lengthy illness at the age of 93.

Kay (Peters) Townsend, beloved wife of the late Elwood Townsend (2008), loving mother of Lois & Gene Baker of Minden, Charles & Patricia of Harcourt, Lynn & Larry Donaldson of Bancroft and David & Isabel of Shoal Lake, beloved grandmother of 9 grandchildren and their families and dear sister of Jean Whitten of Ellenville and the late Clem, Doug and Allen Peters. Kay and Elwood lived in Harcourt for most of their lives and following his death, Kay resided at Haliburton Extencicare for a number of years and for the last 2 years, had been a resident of Hastings Centennial Manor. Kay will be fondly remembered for her love of embroidery, quilting, knitting, keeping her home as her castle, gardening and camping and fishing with Elwood. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Neuman Family Funeral Home in Bancroft. In keeping with Kay's wishes, cremation has taken place at Elmwood Crematorium in Corbyville and her remains will be interred with Elwood in South Wilberforce Cemetery in a private graveside service later in the spring. As expressions of sympathy, donations to Hastings Centennial Manor would be welcomed by the Townsend family.



600

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90 cents (incl. GST)

Education funding is "not as dire as first anticipated"

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

Contrary to its earlier fears of deep cuts, the area's school board will receive a slight increase in provincial funding over the next three years.

Board officials were "cautiously optimistic" late last week after a first look at the government's new funding model for education.

But they say more details from Queen's Park and more analysis are required before they can draw a clear picture of the impact the funding changes will have on the school system.

And they're not ruling out possible layoffs for some teachers, school support workers and administrative staff.

However, last week's announcement of stable funding came as a relief to board administrators and trustees bracing themselves for the worst.

"I'm very cautiously optimistic," said Evelyn Brown, the board's acting director. "I think the situation is not quite as dire as was anticipated."

"I breathed a little bit of a sigh of relief when I first read it ... but we're still waiting to break it down more and see the final implications," said board chair Cheryl Murdoch.

down more and see the final implications," said board chair Cheryl Murdoch.

She and Brown said it could take the board's finance administrators at least two weeks to provide a more detailed analysis of the numbers.

Queen's Park, which took complete control of education funding in January, has promised to spend \$14.4-billion per year over the next three years while reducing "administrative waste."

The funding model — delayed for months and then leaked by the Liberals — last Monday before its official release two days later — attempts to equalize per pupil funding across the province, regardless of location, religion or the economy of the area.

"The funding formula is based on student needs. I think that's a great breakthrough. It's what people asked for," said Victoria-Haliburton MPP Chris Hodgson. "... It's good news for parents. It's good news for students, particularly in our area. And it's good news for teachers."

Local taxpayers also benefit from the funding reforms, he

See EDUCATION page 6

High winds leave much of the county in darkness

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

It was a stormy and a very dark night for thousands of people across the county when high winds toppled trees and hydro wires, blacking out dozens of areas.

At first, Ontario Hydro

PRICE: 84 cents plus GST = 90 cents



thought a tornado might have ripped through the county, given the speed of phone calls from people who's hydro went out just after four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. But when the crews went out, they found the trees broken, not twisted, which indicates the culprit was very high winds.

"There were no major problems, just a lot of little ones," says Minden's first line manager, Everitt McKnight. "The storm broke trees everywhere."

See HYDRO page 4



A FANCIFUL TRADITION: Wilberforce figure skaters used their imagination to see what lives Under the Sea during Saturday night's skating carnival. More photos on page 21; story on page 22.

County Budget: Downloading adds to the total cost, but might not have impact on taxes

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Even though the county has to pick up an extra \$4.34-million in services as part of the province's downloading initiative, this might not translate into a tax increase for property owners.

The county will receive a grant for \$2.34-million more than it got last year under the province's Community Reinvestment Fund to help municipal governments cope with their new responsibilities, such as social assistance, public health and ambulances.

When you take into consideration the \$1.8-million it no longer has to pay for education, this means most of the costs for the downloaded services are covered by the grant. (To get the grant the county must cut its own spending by \$200,000.)

However, absorbing the costs of the OPP is not part of the downloading process because the responsibility was going to be transferred anyway. At a per

household rate of \$90, paying for the OPP would cost taxpayers an extra \$1.8-million a year, but the county has applied for provincial funding to cover this amount.

It's a complicated accounting system, to say the least. The province is downloading services, but it is also making funds available to pay for them. The catch is that this funding is only expected to be offered this year and next, potentially creating a big tax hike in the year 2000.

The county's preliminary budget for 1998, including police, is \$24.4-million. Of that, local property owners will be responsible for \$6.5-million. (A final budget won't be passed until councils and the public have time to respond to the spending proposals.) Highlights include:

- \$273,600 to run the county office
- \$66,000 for Mutual Fire Aid (primarily to update and co-ordinate radio systems)
- \$521,710 for the county's

share of health unit costs

- \$1.6-million for ambulance services (still administered by the Ministry of Health)
- \$460,000 for Hyland Crest on a total budget of \$2.5-million
- \$823,000 for social housing (rent-geared-to-income subsidies)
- \$5,000 for the railway corridor maintenance
- \$10,000 to advance the strategic plan
- \$10,000 for the new marketing committee
- and \$40,000 for the Chamber of Commerce.

The county no longer has to pay for the Children's Aid Society.

"It's not horrendous if we get funding for the OPP," says CAO Les Shepherd, "but there are so many things thrown into the pot it's hard to tell."

As well, with all the changes in assessment — many in the upward direction — it's difficult to forecast what impact all the

See COUNTY'S page 4

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The Haliburton Real Estate Team

COMMERCIAL
THE LAKE VIEW MOTEL \$1,950,000



One of Haliburton's most popular Motels. The Lakeview Motel offers 14 motel rms and personal living quarters. Immaculate grounds and very well maintained buildings. Turnkey operation. Lovely inground pool, 4 hot tubs, horseshoe pit, dining room, BBQ's and much more offered to guests. Personal living quarters with 3 bdrms, 2 baths, 2 living rms and kitchen/dining area. Huge potential to expand on this 3.78-acre parcel.

INGOLDSBY ROAD
\$699,900



This 4-bedroom, 4 bath year-round home is perfectly situated amongst mature trees on 43+ acres. Enjoy beautiful sunsets. Bright kitchen finished with white cabinetry and large island. Living room has cedar cathedral ceilings and stone wood burning fireplace. Partially finished lower level with family room, and walkout to pretty back yard. This multi-level home features a double attached garage, storage sheds and ample space for the family to enjoy the outdoors.

REDSTONE RIVER
\$699,000



Peace and tranquility are the perfect way to describe this stunning riverfront property. Beautiful 11+ acres with fields, forest, trails, and ample wildlife throughout. 3-bedroom, 3 bath year-round home features a bright eat-in kitchen finished with oak cabinetry and walk out to back deck. Open concept living space, large windows throughout providing ample natural lighting. Gorgeous views from sunken living room. Fully finished walkout basement Attached double garage.

HALBIEM CRES
\$699,000



Stunning 4 bedroom, 3 bath home perfectly situated in the prestigious and sought after Haliburton By The Lake subdivision. Bright open concept living on the main level with large living room with wood burning fireplace. Located on the second level is a spacious primary bedroom and ensuite with heated tile floor, 3 additional bedrooms, main bathroom and family room with propane fireplace. Close to Haliburton village. Only a short walk to Head Lake. Access to HBTLM Members-Only park. Level yard, double attached garage, peace and tranquility.

KASHAGAWIGAMOG
LAKE RD \$699,000



This stunning year-round home/cottage is conveniently located between the town of Minden and Haliburton village. Main floor features a bright open concept living space, wood cabinetry, powder room and in-floor radiant heat. The second floor offers 3 bdrms, 1 bath, 19-foot vaulted ceilings and stunning maple hardwood flooring. This beautiful home was built in 2016 on a 113+ acre parcel of land.

MINDEN LAKE
\$665,000



Stunning year-round 2-bdrm home or cottage. 104 ft of frontage on Minden Lake. Fully renovated home now provides a calm and comforting cottage atmosphere. Bright open concept and pretty lake front views. Drink your morning coffee while enjoying the views across the lake of the white-water rapids from your large deck. Partially finished lower level

ARCHIE STREET
\$439,000



Conveniently located in a quiet neighborhood. Bright and spacious 4 bdrm, 2 bath home with many recent improvements. Large kitchen and open concept dining and living area. Four-season sunroom that leads to a large deck. 20 x 28 garage. Large family room with a propane stone fireplace. A short 3 minute walk to all of Minden's attractions and amenities

VACANT LOTS

NEW LISTING
PERCY LAKE
0.59AC \$359,000

LOUISE LANE
35+AC \$275,000

KASHAGAWIGAMOG
LAKE RD ~~SOLD~~ \$139,500

BASSHAUT LAKE
ROAD ~~SOLD~~ 1.88AC \$126,900

NEW LISTING
HIGHWAY 35
0.59AC \$79,900

NEW LISTING
HIGHWAY 35
0.83AC \$79,900

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